



Minutes of Friends of Cammo General Meeting held at Cammo Lodge on 8th March 2023

Present: Nick Benge (Chairperson), Simon Gillam (Secretary), Lynn Whitehead (Treasurer), Michael Roe, Gill Harris, Grahame Whitehead, Sheena McRobie, Claire Wallace, Bruce Angus, Alan Childs, Bert Scott, Euan Drysdale, Liz Drysdale, Peter Scott, Harry Taylor, Judy Arrowsmith, Lorraine Clarke, Rhona Paterson, Katherine Thomson, Maike Neuhaus, Carol Smith.

Apologies: Karen Edwards, Ann Currie, Esther Davidson, Norma Johnstone, Callum Towns, Alistair Emery, Fiona Briglmen, Carol Turnbull.

Lynn was thanked for her hard work in cleaning the Lodge and for providing drinks and nibbles.

Annual General Meeting

Minutes and Matters Arising

The meeting had been postponed from 1 March 2023 because we could not access the Lodge over the new paving. Apologies were given for the short notice.

Annual Report and Accounts

Friends of Cammo ended 2022 with a credit bank balance of £6,064 an increase of £1,433. Remaining restricted funds were £215 for information panels, after receiving and spending £626 on a bench and spending £100 for wetland. The report had been lodged with OSCR and posted on our website.

Election of Office Bearers and Committee Members

Gill Harris is standing down from the Committee and was presented with a gift and grateful thanks from the committee and members. All of the Office Bearers and other Committee members were willing to stand for re-election, with Bruce Angus (co-opted in June 2022) standing for election. There were no objections or other nominees. Nick Benge (Chair), Simon Gillam (Secretary), Lynn Whitehead (Treasurer), Karen Edwards, Michael Roe and Bruce Angus, all proposed by Rhona Paterson and seconded by Harry Taylor.

Date for next Annual General Meeting: Wednesday 6th March 2024 at 7.30 at Cammo Lodge.

Other Business

Membership Update (Simon Gillam)

On behalf of Karen, Simon reported that the latest records show 228 fully paid-up members including one new member since the start of 2023. The Committee are doing a leaflet drop at Cammo Meadows on Saturday 11th March, to cover up to 300 occupied homes. Subs for 2023 are due in April and Simon will send an email reminder in late March.

Treasurer's Update (Lynn Whitehead)

Lynn reported no major spend or income so far in 2023. Nick indicated that the first major spend could be on planting for bees in the Walled Garden, to the extent that it exceeds the Council contribution of £2340.

Environmental Update (Nick Benge)

- Nick has installed 20 Great Tit boxes.
- Logs and brash have been delivered, and moved to form piles and shut down unwanted paths. A stoat is using log piles near the drive and wood wasps are breeding in softwood logs. Woodchips have been delivered and spread on paths and as mulch around trees.

- The Council have put a wooden headwall at the top of the stream in South Field, where it had been eroded by dogs, willow whips planted above it and woodchips spread around them.
- Nick has replaced newly planted trees lost to vole damage, planted more trees at the top of the wetland and put willow whips in a wet area near the wetland.
- After paths were constructed to the two ends of the wetland boardwalk, the banks of soil have been sown with annual wildflower seeds.
- Nick has removed invasive few-flowered leek, which is non-native and out-competes other vegetation, binning the plants. It can spread long distances but is under control in Cammo.
- P1 contractors have installed new paving at the Lodge and a drain to the wall, but not yet installed storage units behind the Lodge.
- Peter Scott has been liaising with the Council and Cala about a new pedestrian entry to Cammo from the Cammo Meadows development, seeking funding from Cala/DWH for the entrance, path work and a map board redesign. As part of this, he has surveyed the wetland area and is producing a better map.
- A notice and leaflet have been drafted, drawing attention to dog problems and asking dog walkers to keep dogs under control. He noted that some problems had ended after dog walkers had been spoken to. It was recommended that we also put something on social media. Leaflets will be available from the Lodge for those who wish to carry some.
- Work has been done in the Walled Garden orchard, pruning the fruit trees, mulching them with wood chips, clearing some tall vegetation from around the trees and cutting back ivy that was surrounding a few trees. Peter asked whether we are planning to plant more fruit trees and in reply it was said that this is being considered for next winter; he recommended that any additional trees should expand the orchard area rather than planted in gaps.
- Volunteers cleared and dug two areas of the Walled Garden in preparation for planting for bees.
- Simon has cleared ivy and other vegetation from around Pinetum trees near the Japanese Umbrella Pine, and spread woodchips as mulch. Sheena commented that the cages around the Pinetum trees planted in 2021 by ELGT were now too small. Nick agreed and said that it should be OK to remove them now; he would raise this with ELGT.

Cammo Management Group:

There have now been five monthly meetings of this group, intended to improve liaison between the Council, Friends of Cammo, EAFS, Forest Kindergarten and Forest School, although the latter have not yet participated. Before the latest meeting David Kyles had moved to a new job in SE Edinburgh, initially on 6 months secondment, and responsibility for Cammo allocated to Caroline Paterson. She attended the meeting, along with Martin Duncan. Future meetings will be every second month.

- The main topic of the meeting had been scheduled to be Cammo Management Plan, but this had not been possible because of David's move. Friends of Cammo had offered to take the lead in drafting the plan, to replace the previous plan that ran to 2020, but needed to receive a copy of what had been done by David. The plan should also cover spend of the remaining Home Farm capital.
- There had been no progress on Council cleaning for the Lodge, despite a schedule and joint funding from Forest Kindergarten having been agreed.
- EAFS had reported that they continue to work on the glasshouse, and want to find where it ends. Also found some remains of central glasshouse, located a well and found some metal. They are looking at possible other areas of Cammo to explore. Cammo finds are to be brought together and looked through at a unit at Murrayburn. EAFS work at Cammo will change from Monday to Tuesday from March onwards.
- Forest Kindergarten had reported that they are using a van for storage, and are getting a new one that can be left on-site rather than driven from/to school premises each day. It may be left behind Cammo House, and in the long run a storage unit may be more suitable than the van. There will be a meeting on 20th March about a study to assess the on-site impact of Forest Kindergarten.

Archaeology Report

In the absence of a report from EAFS, the latest information we have is the report to Cammo Management Group, above.

Any Other Business

- Vegetation in the small pond in the stream is being destroyed by dogs; some action may be needed.
- The sub reminder will include a note that we welcome donations. At present we receive a good level of donations.
- Alan suggested that we create a 3 minute video aimed at visitors new to Cammo, emphasising responsible usage, and that this could be accessed by a QR code. It was agreed to look into this.
- Alan reported that the Forest Church linked to Craigsbank Church plans to increase the number of meetings at Cammo, from 4/year to monthly, on the 3rd Sunday of each month, and switch from morning to afternoon. Meetings are likely to be held in the south-west corner of Cammo, and participants are encouraged to walk to Cammo. It was confirmed that Friends of Cammo are happy with this proposal, and Alan confirmed that Council park events approval is being sought.

Meeting Dates in 2023

Ordinary meetings in 2023 are on 14th June, 6th September, 6th December, all at 7.30pm in Cammo Lodge.

Friends of Cammo
March 2023